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## **Sen. Toy's bill to aid hundreds of Michiganians awaiting organ donations sent to governor**

**LANSING** – Legislation creating a fund to help improve Michigan's alarmingly low rate of organ donor registrations today received unanimous support from the Michigan Senate, announced Sen. Laura Toy, sponsor of the bill.

"Michigan's organ donor registry has one of the lowest participation rates in the nation," said Toy, R-Livonia. "It is critical that we educate residents on the importance of becoming a registered organ donor so we can improve this alarming statistic and, as a direct result, the quality of life for Michigan residents."

Just 7 percent of Michigan residents are registered on the state's organ donor list. The national average for such lists is 40 percent. As of Dec. 1, there were more than 2800 people waiting for donor organs in Michigan.

Senate Bill 817 would create the "Organ and Tissue Donation Education Fund" and provide individuals an opportunity to make a financial contribution to the fund when applying for or renewing driver's license or state ID card. Money in the new fund would be used to encourage Michigan residents to place their names on the organ donor registry.

"We recognize a program like this will result in some administrative costs for the Secretary of State, which is why a portion of the money raised is allocated to offset those costs," Toy said. "The most important cost to address is the cost to society for every individual who dies while waiting for an organ transplant. You can't put a price tag on a person's life."

The bill is supported by AARP, Gift of Life of Michigan, the Henry Ford Transplant Institute, University of Michigan Health System, Donate Life Coalition of Michigan and the Detroit Minority Organ Tissue Transplant Education Program.

SB 817 now goes to the governor for consideration.

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